Dr. *TILLOTSON's*
FAST-SERMON
BEFORE THE
Lord Mayor, and Court of Aldermen,
JUNE 18th, 1690.

Pilkington Mayor.

Mercurii xviii Junii 1690 *Annoq; Regis & Reginæ Willelmi & Mariæ, Angliæ, &c. Secundo.*

THIS Court doth desire Dr. *Tillotson*, Dean of St. *Paul's*, to Print his Sermon preach'd before the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of *London*, at St. *Mary le Bow*.

Wagstaffe.

29th Sermon

A

SERMON

Preached at St *Mary le Bow*

BEFORE THE

LORD MAYOR,

Court of Aldermen, & Citizens

OF

LONDON,

ON

Wedneſday the 18th of *June*;

A Day Appointed by Their MAJESTIES,

FOR

A Solemn Monthly FAST.

By *JOHN TILLOTSON*, D. D.
Dean of St *Paul's*, and Clerk of the Cloſet to His Majeſty.

London: Printed for *Brabazon Aylmer*, at the *Three Pidgeons* in *Cornhill*; *Will. Rogers*, at the *Sun* over-againſt St. *Dunſtan's* Church in *Fleetſtreet*; And *J. Tillotſon*, Bookſeller in *London*, 1690.

29 cm max

To the Right Honourable

Sir *THOMAS PILKINGTON*,

Lord Mayor of the City of *LONDON*,

AND THE

COURT of ALDERMEN.

My Lord,

IN *Obedience to Your Commands, I have publiſh'd this Sermon lately preach'd before You, and do now humbly preſent You with it; heartily wiſhing it may have that good effect for the reformation of our Lives, and reconciliation of our unhappy Differences, which was ſincerely intended by,*

My Lord,

Your moſt Faithful

and Humble Servant,

J. TILLOTSON.

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Jeremiah VI. 8.

Be thou inſtructed O Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, leſt I make thee deſolate, a land not inhabited.*

THeſe Words are a merciful warning from God to the People of *Iſrael* by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, the laſt Prophet that God ſent to them before their Captivity in *Babylon*.

The time of this Propheſie was of a long continuance, above the ſpace of forty years, *viz.* from the thirteenth year of King *Joſiah*, to the eleventh year of King *Zedekiah*, the year in which *Jeruſalem* was taken by *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*.

This I obſerve, to ſhew the great patience of God to a ſinful Nation. And this is much the ſame ſpace of time that God gave warning by our Bleſſed *Saviour* and his *Apoſtles* to the ſame People of the *Jews* concerning their final Deſtruction. For it was about forty years after the Prediction of our Saviour concerning it, juſt before his Death, that the terrible Deſtruction

ction of *Jeruſalem* and the *Jewiſh* Nation was executed upon them by the *Romans*, or rather chiefly by themſelves; as I ſhall preſently ſhew. Of which dreadful Deſolation, the firſt taking of *Jeruſalem* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and their Captivity into *Babylon* was a kind of Type and Forerunner. For, as *Joſephus* obſerves, the taking of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus Veſpaſian* did happen in the very ſame Month, and on the very ſame Day of the Month in which *Jeruſalem* was taken by *Nebuchadnezzar*, *viz.* upon our *tenth* of *Auguſt*.

And it is not unworthy of our obſervation, that the time of God's warning is wont to hold ſome ſort of proportion with the extent of his Judgments. Before the univerſal Deluge which deſtroyed the whole World, *Noah* and his Family onely excepted, God gave a much longer warning by the preaching of *Noah*, for the ſpace of an *hundred and twenty years*. Before the deſtruction of a particular Nation, if we may judge by Gods dealing with the *Jews*, his time of warning is *forty years*. And before the deſtruction of a particular City, if we may conclude any thing from the ſingle example of *Niniveh*, the time of Gods warning is yet much ſhorter, the ſpace of *forty days*.

And

And now to what end doth God exerciſe ſo much patience and threaten ſo long beforehand, but that by the terrour of his threatnings men may be brought to repentance, and by repentance may prevent the execution of them? For all the while that God by his Prophet threatens ruine and deſtruction to the People of *Iſrael*, he earneſtly invites and urges them to repentance, that by this means they might eſcape the ruine that was denounced againſt them: This being a condition perpetually implyed in the denunciation of publique judgments, that if a People repent of the evil of their doings God alſo will repent of the evil which he ſaid he would do unto them, as he expreſly declares *chap.* 18. *verſ.* 7, 8. *At what inſtant I ſpeak concerning a Nation and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up and to pull down and to deſtroy it, if that Nation againſt whom I have pronounc'd turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil which I thought to do unto them.* And here in the *Text*, after God had threaten'd deſtruction to *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of the over-flowing of all manner of wickedneſs and oppreſſion in the midſt of her, he gives her a merciful warning to prevent this ruine and deſolation by repentance, *verſ.* 6, 7. *Thus hath*

the Lord of Hoſts ſaid, Hew ye down trees, and caſt a mount againſt Jeruſalem ; *this is a City to be viſited, ſhe is wholly oppreſſion in the midſt of her. As a fountain caſteth out waters, ſo ſhe caſteth out her wickedneſs. Before me continually is grief and wounds.* And yet when he had pronounced this fearful Sentence upon her, he tells her that all this miſery and deſolation might yet be prevented, if they would but hearken to the counſel of God, and be inſtructed by him concerning the things of their peace: For ſo it follows in the next words, *Be thou inſtructed O* Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, leſt I make thee deſolate, a land not inhabited. Be thou inſtructed O* Jeruſalem, that is, do but now at laſt take that counſel and warning which hath ſo often, and ſo long, been tender'd to thee by my ſervant the Prophet, who hath now for the ſpace of forty years continually, and that with great earneſtneſs and importunity, been warning thee of this danger and calling thee to repentance and a better mind.

Leſt my ſoul depart from thee. In the *Hebrew* it is, *Leſt my ſoul be looſened and disjointed from thee*, as it is in the margin of your Bibles ; hereby ſignifying, in the moſt emphatical

cal manner, the wonderful affection and kindneſs which God had for his People, and how ſtrongly his ſoul was link'd to them, and how loth he was to withdraw his love from them; it was like the tearing off of a limb, or the plucking of a joint in ſunder: ſo unwilling is God to come to extremity; ſo hardly is he brought to reſolve upon the ruine even of a ſinful Nation: How much rather would he, that they would be inſtructed and receive correction, and hearken to the things of their peace? But if they will not be perſuaded, if no warning will work upon them, *his ſpirit will not always ſtrive with them*; but *his ſoul* will at laſt, though with great unwillingneſs and reluctancie, *depart from them.*

And then, no interceſſion will prevail for them; as he threatens by the ſame Prophet, *chap.* 15. *verſ.* 1. *Then ſaid the Lord unto me, though* Moſes *and* Daniel *ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this People; caſt them out of my ſight and let them go forth*; away with them into Captivity, for they have loſt my heart, and no interceſſion of others for them, nothing but their own repentance can recover it.

And when his Soul is once departed from a People, and his heart turn'd againſt them, then all ſorts of evils and calamities will be let looſe upon them; as we may read in the next *verſe* of that *Chapter*: *And it ſhall come to paſs if they ſay unto thee, whither ſhall we go forth? Then ſhalt thou tell them, Thus ſaith the Lord, ſuch as are for death to death, and ſuch as are for the ſword to the ſword, and ſuch as are for the famine to the famine, and ſuch as are for the captivity to the captivity.* For then God will be weary of repenting, as he tells them *verſe 6. Thou haſt forſaken me, ſaith the Lord, thou art gone backward; therefore will I ſtretch out my hand againſt thee and deliver thee, I am weary of repenting.* By our obſtinate impenitency we harden the heart of God againſt us, and make *him weary of repenting.* And when his ſoul is thus departed from a People, nothing remains but a fearful expectation of ruine. *Wo unto them,* ſaith God by the Prophet, *when I depart from them.* Therefore *be thou inſtructed O* Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, leſt I make thee deſolate, a Land not inhabited.*

Jer. 15. 2.

Hoſ. 9. 12.

Having given this account of the Words, I ſhall obſerve from them three things well worth our conſideration.

Firſt,

First, The infinite goodneſs and patience of God towards a ſinful People, and his great unwillingneſs to bring ruine and deſtruction upon them; *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, leſt I make thee deſolate, a Land not inhabited.* How loth is He that things ſhould come to this extremity? He is not without great difficulty, and ſome kind of violence, as it were, offered to himſelf, brought to this ſevere reſolution; his ſoul is, as it were, *rent* and *disjoynted* from them.

Secondly, You ſee here what is the only proper and effectual means to prevent the miſery and ruine of a ſinful People. If they will be *inſtructed* and take warning by the threatnings of God, and will become wiſer and better, then *his ſoul* will not *depart from them*, he will not bring upon them the *deſolation* which he hath threatned.

Thirdly, You have here intimated the miſerable caſe and condition of a People, when God takes off his affection from them, and gives over all further care and concernment for them. Wo unto them, when *his ſoul departs from them.* For when God once leaves them, then all ſorts of evils and calamities will break in upon them.

I ſhall ſpeak as briefly as I can to theſe *three* Obſervations from the *Text*.

I. *Firſt*, I obſerve the infinite patience and goodneſs of God towards a ſinful People, and his great unwillingneſs to bring ruine and deſtruction upon them; *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, leſt I make thee deſolate, a Land not inhabited.* How loth is God that things ſhould come to this? He is very patient to particular perſons, notwithſtanding their great and innumerable provocations. *God is ſtrong and patient*, though men *provoke him every day.* And much greater is his patience to whole Nations and great Communities of men.

How great was it to the old World, *when the long ſuffering of God waited in the days of* Noah, for the ſpace of an hundred and twenty years? And did not expire, till *he ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was grown great upon the earth*, and *that all fleſh had corrupted its way*; not till it was neceſſary to drown the World to cleanſe it, and to deſtroy Mankind to reform it, by beginning a *new* World upon the only righteous Family that was left of all the laſt generation of the *Old.* For ſo God teſtifies concerning *Noah*, when he commanded him to enter into the

the Ark, ſaying, *Come thou and all thy houſe into the* Ark; *for thee*, that is thee only, *have I ſeen righteous before me in this Generation.* Gen. 7. 1.

The patience of God was great likewiſe to *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* and the Cities about them. For when *the cry of their ſins had reached heaven*, and called loud for vengeance to be poured down upon them, to expreſs the wonderful patience of God towards ſuch grievous Sinners, though nothing is hid from his ſight and knowledge, yet he is repreſented as coming down from Heaven to Earth on purpoſe to enquire into the truth of things, and *whether they were altogether according to the cry that was come up to him.* And when he found things as bad as was poſſible, yet then was he willing to have come almoſt to the loweſt terms imaginable, that if there had been but *ten righteous perſons* in thoſe wicked Cities, *he would not have deſtroy'd them for the ten's ſake.*

Nay he comes to lower termes yet, with the City of *Jeruſalem*, *Jer.* 5. 1. *Run ye to and fro through the ſtreets of* Jeruſalem, *and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment and ſeeketh the truth, and I will pardon it.*

What

What can be imagin'd more ſlow, and mild, and merciful, than the proceedings of the Divine juſtice againſt a ſinful People? God is repreſented in Scripture as taking a long time to *make ready his bow*, and to *whet his glittering ſword*, before *his hand takes hold of* vengeance; as if the inſtruments of his wrath lay by him blunt and ruſty and unready for uſe. Many a time he threatens, and many a time lifts up his hand, before he gives the fatal blow. And how glad is he when any good man will ſtep in and interpoſe to ſtay his hand? As we read *Pſal.* 106. 23. *Therefore he ſaid*, ſpeaking of the People of *Iſrael*, *that he would deſtroy them, had not* Moſes *his ſervant ſtood in the breach to turn away his wrath, leſt he ſhould deſtroy them.* And how kindly doth God take it of *Phinehas*, as a moſt acceptable piece of ſervice done to him, and which he hardly knew how ſufficiently to reward, that he was a means of putting a ſtop to his anger againſt the People of *Iſrael*: Inſomuch that the Pſalmiſt tells us that *it was accounted to him for righteouſneſs to all generations for evermore.* I will recite the whole paſſage at large, becauſe it is remarkable. When the People of *Iſrael* were ſeduced into Idolatry and Whoredom by the Daughters of *Moab*, *Phinehas* in

in great zeal ſtood up and executed judgment upon *Zimri* and *Cozbi* in the very act: By which means the Plague which was broken out upon the Congregation of *Iſrael* was preſently ſtayed. Hear what God ſays to *Moſes* concerning this act of *Phineahs*. *The Lord ſpake unto* Moſes *ſaying*, Phinehas *the ſon of* Eleazer, *the ſon of* Aaron *the Prieſt, hath turned away my wrath from the Children of* Iſrael, *whilſt he was zealous for my ſake that I conſumed them not. Wherefore ſay, Behold I give unto him my Covenant of peace, and he ſhall have it, and his ſeed after him, even the Covenant of an everlaſting Prieſthood, becauſe he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the Children of* Iſrael: That which God takes ſo kindly at his hands, next to his zeal for Him, is, that he pacified God's wrath towards the Children of *Iſrael.*

And thus did God from time to time deal with the People of *Iſrael*, that great Example of the Old Teſtament of the merciful methods of the Divine Providence towards a ſinful Nation. And an Example, as *St. Paul* tells us, purpoſely *recorded for our admonition upon whom the ends of the World are come.* 1 Cor. 10. 11.

Let us therefore conſider a little the aſtoniſhing patience of God towards that perverſe

People. After all the ſigns and wonders which He had wrought in their deliverance out of *Egypt*, and for their ſupport in the Wilderneſs; and notwithſtanding their groſs and ſtupid infidelity and horrible ingratitude to God their Saviour, and all their rebellious murmurings and diſcontents, yet he ſuffer'd their manners for the ſpace of forty years.

And when they were at laſt peaceably ſettled in the promiſed Land; notwithſtanding their frequent relapſes into Idolatry, with what patience did God expect their repentance, and the reſult of all the merciful meſſages and warnings given them from time to time by his Prophets, as one that earneſtly deſir'd it and even long'd for it? *O* Jeruſalem, *waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayeſt be ſaved; how long ſhall vaine thoughts lodge within thee?* that is, how long wilt thou delude thy ſelf with vaine hopes of eſcaping the judgments of God by any other way than by repentance? And again, *O* Jeruſalem, *wilt thou not be made clean? when ſhall it once be?* And *chap.* 8. *verſ.* 6. ſays God there, *I hearkened and I heard, but they ſpake not aright; no man repented him of his wickedneſs, ſaying, What have I done?* Where God is repreſented, after the manner of men, waiting

Jer. 4. 14.

Jer. 13. 27.

ing with great patience, as one that would have been glad to have heard any penitent word drop from them, to have seen any sign of their repentance and return to a better mind.

And when they made some shews of repentance, and had some fits of good resolution that did presently vanish and come to nothing, how passionately does God complain of their fickleness and inconstancy? *O* Ephraim, *what shall I do unto thee? O Judah*, what shall I do unto thee? *for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.*

And at last, when nothing would do, with what difficulty and reluctancy does God deliver them up into the hands of their Enemies? *How shall I give thee up* Ephraim? *How shall I deliver thee* Judah? *How shall I make thee as* Admah? *how shall I set thee as* Zeboim? *mine heart is turned within me, and my repentings are kindled together; I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not destroy* Ephraim. What a conflict is here? what tenderness and yerning of his bowels towards them? He cannot find in his heart to give them up, till he is forc'd to it by the last necessity. Hos. 11. 8, 9.

And when the Nation of the *Jews*, after their return from the Captivity of *Babylon*, had

in the courſe of ſeveral Ages greatly corrupted themſelves, and fill'd up the meaſure of their ſins by *crucifying the Lord of Life and Glory* yet how ſlow was the patience of God in bringing that fatal and final Deſtruction upon them? Not till after the moſt merciful warnings given to them, by the *Apoſtles* of our *Lord* and *Saviour*; not till after the moſt obſtinate impenitency of forty years, under the moſt powerful means of repentance that any People in the World ever enjoyed. I proceed to the

II. *Second* Obſervation from the *Text*, *namely*, What is the only proper and effectual means to prevent the ruine of a ſinful People? And that is, if they will be *inſtructed* and take warning by the threatnings of God to become wiſer and better, then *his ſoul will not depart from them*, and he will not bring upon them the *deſolation* threatned. *Be thou inſtructed, O* Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, and I make thee deſolate, a Land not inhabited*; intimating, or rather plainly declaring to us, that if we will receive inſtruction and take warning the evil threatn'd ſhall not come. For what other reaſon can there be, why God ſhould threaten ſo long before he ſtrikes, and ſo earneſtly

neſtly preſs men to repentance, but that he might have the opportunity to ſpare them and ſhew mercy to them?

And indeed, as I obſerv'd before, all the denunciations and threatnings of God to a ſinful Nation do carry this tacit condition in them, that if that Nation turn from their evil ways, God will repent of the evil which he thought to do unto them. For God never paſſeth ſo irrevocable a Sentence upon a Nation, as to exclude the caſe of repentance: Nay on the contrary He gives all imaginable encouragement to it, and is always ready to meet it, with a pardon in his hand. *How often would I have gathered thee*, ſays our merciful Lord when he wept over *Jeruſalem*, *as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not; therefore your Houſe is left unto you deſolate.*

God is very merciful to particular perſons upon their repentnace. When the *Prodigal Son* in the *Parable*, after all his riot and lewdneſs came to himſelf and reſolv'd to return home, his *Father ſeeing him yet afar of* coming towards him, *came out to meet him, and had compaſſion on him and kiſſed him.* And can any of us be ſo obſtinate and hard-hearted, as not preſently to reſolve to repent and return, and to meet the

the compaſſions of ſuch a Father? Who, after we have offended him to the uttermoſt, is upon the firſt diſcovery of our repentance ready to be as kind to us, as he could poſſibly have been if we had never offended him.

And much more is God ready to receive a Nation upon their ſincere Repentance; when his Judgments muſt needs make great havock, and ſo many are like to ſuffer under them. This conſideration God urgeth and pleads with his froward Prophet, in behalf of the great City of *Niniveh*. *And ſhall not I ſpare that great City of Niniveh, wherein are more than ſixſcore thouſand perſons, who cannot diſcern their right hand from their left?* that is, ſo many innocent children, by which we may judge of the vaſt number of the reſt of the Inhabitants. For this is a great conſideration with God in his ſending of publique Calamities, the multitude of the Sufferers; and that not only the guilty but the innocent alſo, without a ſpecial and miraculous Providence, muſt be involved in a common Calamity.

John 4. 11.

Sometimes God reſpites his Judgments upon the meer external humiliation of a People, and ſome formal teſtimonies and expreſſions of their repentance. When the People of *Iſrael ſought God*

Pſal. 78.

God and enquired early after him, though *they did but flatter him with their mouth*, and *their heart was not right with him*, yet the *Pſalmiſt* tells us, *that being full of compaſſion he forgave their iniquity and deſtroyed them not*; that is, he forgave them ſo far as to reſpite their ruine.

And much more will a ſincere and effectual Repentance ſtay God's hand, and infallibly turn him from the fierceneſs of his anger: Inſomuch that after he had fix'd and determin'd the very Day for the deſtruction of *Niniveh*, and had engaged the credit of his Prophet in it, yet as ſoon as *he ſaw their works, and that they turned from their evil ways*, and how glad was he to ſee it? he preſently *repented of the evil which he had ſaid he would do unto them, and he did it not*. In this caſe God does not ſtand upon the reputation of his Prophet, by whom he had ſent ſo peremptory a meſſage to them; but his mercy breaks through all conſiderations, and *rejoyceth againſt judgment*: For he cannot find in his heart to ruine thoſe who by the terrour of his judgements will be brought to repentance.

And this ſurely is a mighty motive and encouragement to repentance, to be aſſur'd that we ſhall find mercy; and that when our ruine is even decreed, and all the inſtruments of God's wrath

wrath are fix'd and ready for execution, and his hand is juſt taking hold of vengeance, yet even then a ſincere repentance will mitigate his hotteſt diſpleaſure and turn away his wrath. And if we will not come in upon theſe terms, we extort the judgments of God from him and force him to depart from us, and with violent hands we pull down vengeance upon our own heads.

III. *Thirdly* and laſtly, the *Text* intimates to us the miſerable caſe and condition of a People when God takes off his heart and affection from them, when he gives over all further care and concernment for them, and abandons them to their own wickedneſs and folly, and to the miſerable effects and conſequences thereof: *Wo unto them, when his ſoul departs from them:* For then all ſorts of evils and calamities will ruſh in, and *wrath will come upon them to the uttermoſt*; as was threatn'd to the *Jews* a little before their final deſtruction, and executed upon them in the moſt terrible and amazing manner that ever was from the foundation of the World. *Theſe*, as our Bleſſed Saviour expreſſes it, were *days of vengeance* indeed, that *all things which were written*, that is foretold by *Moſes* and the *Prophets* concerning the fearful end of this perverſe and ſtiff-neck'd People, *might be fulfilled.* And

And becauſe my *Text* ſpeaks to *Jeruſalem*, *Be thou inſtructed*, O Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, leſt I make thee deſolate, a Land not inhabited*; though this was ſpoken to *Jeruſalem* before her Captivity into *Babylon*, yet becauſe this firſt Captivity was but a faint Type of her laſt and final Deſolation by the *Romans*, when *God's Soul* was indeed *departed from Her*, and *Judea* was *left deſolate, a Land not inhabited*: I ſhall therefore briefly repreſent to you the full effect of this Threatning in her laſt final Deſtruction, when *God's Soul* was, as it *were*, perfectly *looſen'd* and *disjoynted* from Her: That you may ſee what the fierceneſs and power of God's Anger is, when *he departs from them*, and *wrath comes upon them to the uttermoſt*, becauſe they would not be *inſtructed and know the time of their viſitation.*

Thus it was with the *Jews*, about forty years after the Paſſion of our *Lord*, whom *with wicked hands they had crucified and ſlain*: Then was *God's ſoul departed from them*: Then darkneſs and deſolation came upon them; and they were in a far worſe condition than a Country would be that is forſaken of the Sun and left condemn'd to a perpetual night, in which darkneſs and diſorder, faction and fury do reign and rage; together with all the fatal conſequences of *zeal and ſtrife*, which, *St. James* tells us, are *confuſion and every evil work.*

For when God is once gone, all the good and happineſs of Mankind departs together with Him: Then men fall foul upon one another, divide into Parties and Factions, and execute the vengeance of God upon themſelves with their own hands.

Thus it happen'd to the *Jewiſh* Nation, when the meaſure of their iniquity was full, and their final ruine was approaching. And that we might know their Fate, and be inſtructed by it, God provided and preſerv'd a faithful Hiſtorian on purpoſe, who was an Eye-witneſs of all that befel them: I mean *Joſephus*, who was perſonally engaged, and was a conſiderable Commander in the Wars of the *Jews* with the *Romans*, before the Siege of *Jeruſalem*: And during the Siege was preſent in the *Roman* Camp, and being a *Jew* himſelf hath tranſmitted theſe things to poſterity in a moſt exact and admirable *Hiſtory*: ſuch a Hiſtory, as no man that hath the heart and bowels of a man can read without the greateſt pity and aſtoniſhment.

In the *Preface* of that lamentable *Hiſtory* he tells us, *that all the misfortunes and calamities which the World from the beginning of it had ſeen, compar'd with this laſt Calamity of the* Jewiſh *Nation, were but ſlight and inconſiderable.* He tells us likewiſe, that their *Civil diſſentions* were the next and immediate cauſe of their confuſion and ruine.

And this more than once: For when *Pompey*, about

about fixty years before our *Saviour*'s birth, ſate down before *Jeruſalem*, he tells us, * that the Factions and diviſions which they had among themſelves were the cauſe of the taking the City and Temple at that time. And when they rebelled afterwards, that the Heads of their Factions provok'd the *Romans*, and brought them unwillingly upon them, and at laſt forced the beſt natur'd Prince in the World *Titus Veſpaſian* to that ſeverity which he moſt earneſtly deſired by all means to have prevented. And he further tells us, that even before the Siege of *Jeruſalem*, the Cities of *Judea* had all of them civil diſcords among themſelves, and that in every City one part of the *Jews* fought againſt another.

* *Lib.* 1. *c.* 5.

Lib. 4. *c.* 5.

And when *Jeruſalem* began to be beſieged, What a miſerable condition was it in, by the cruelty of the *Zealots* under the command of *John* the Son of *Giorah*? And preſently after another Faction aroſe under *Simon*, who enter'd into the City with a freſh Force and aſſaulted the *Zealots* in the Temple; ſo that moſt miſerable havock was made between them. And then a *third* Faction ſtarted up under *Eleazer*, as bad as either of the other: So that infinite almoſt were the numbers of the People within the City that were barbarouſly ſlain by theſe Seditions.

Lib. 7. *c.* 1.

And what an infatuation was this? when the

Enemy was at the Gates and ready to break in upon them, to employ their whole ſtrength and force againſt one another: When the ſame courage and fury, which they ſpent ſo freely upon themſelves, had it been turn'd with the like deſperateneſs and obſtinacy upon the *Romans*, might have endanger'd the whole force of the *Roman* Empire. Once or twice indeed they ſeem'd to lay aſide their enmity for a little while, and to unite in the common defence; but as ſoon as the danger of a preſent aſſault was over, they relaps'd into their former ſtate of inteſtine enmity and diſſention, as if that had been their main buſineſs, and the preſervation of their City againſt the *Romans* only a work by the by, and not much to be regarded.

And to add to all their other miſeries, they were ſo blinded by their own rage and madneſs, that they wilfully brought upon themſelves an extream Famine. For, as the *Hiſtorian* tells us, they themſelves ſet on fire vaſt ſtores of corn and other neceſſaries, ſufficient to have ſerv'd them for many years; and by this means the City was much ſooner reduc'd, even by a Famine of their own making, and which could not have been brought upon them but by themſelves.

This Famine, beſides all the other miſeries and cruelties which it occaſion'd within the City, did force great numbers of them to ſteal out by night into

into the *Roman* Camp; where they met with as cruel but a ſpeedier death. For *Titus*, in hope to reduce them the ſooner by terrour, order'd all thoſe that came out of the City to be crucified before the Walls. Which order was ſo ſeverely executed, that for ſeveral days five hundred a day were crucifi'd, till there was neither room left to place Croſſes in, nor wood whereof to make them: So that they who once cryed out ſo vehemently againſt our *Saviour*, *Crucify him, Crucify him*, had enough of it at laſt, and by the juſt and moſt remarkable judgment of God were paid home in their own kind.

Behold the ſad Fate of a ſinful People, when God is departed from them! Then all evils overtake them at once. For as their miſery increaſed, ſo did their Impiety to that degree, that the *Hiſtorian* tells us, *they ſcorned and mocked at all divine and holy things, and derided the Oracles of the Prophets, eſteeming them no better than Fables*; and, in a word, were carried to that extremity of wickedneſs, as not only to profane their *Temple* in the higheſt manner, and to break the Laws of their own Religion, but even to violate the Laws of Nature and Humanity in the groſſeſt Inſtances: which made their *Hiſtorian* to give that diſmal character of them, *that as he thought no City ever ſuffer'd ſuch things, ſo no Nation, from the beginning* Lib. 5. c. 2. Lib. 6. c. 11.

ning of the World, did ever ſo abound in all manner of wickedneſs and impiety: A certain ſign that *God's Soul* was *departed* from them.

And the ſame *Hiſtorian* afterwards, upon conſideration of the lamentable ſtate into which their Seditions had brought them, breaks out into this doleful lamentation over them, *O miſerable City! what didſt thou ſuffer from the* Romans, *though at laſt they ſet thee on fire to purge thee from thy ſins, that is to be compar'd with thoſe miſeries which thou haſt brought upon thy ſelf?* Lib. 7. c. 1.

To ſuch a diſmal ſtate did things come at laſt, that, as the ſame *Hiſtorian* relates, *many of the* Jews *prayed for the good ſucceſs of their Enemies, to deliver them from their civil Diſſentions, the Calamity whereof was ſo great that their final Deſtruction by the* Romans *did rather put an end to their miſery than increaſe it,*

--------- En! quo diſcordia Cives
Perduxit miſeros---------

To conclude this ſad Story. It was the *Jews* themſelves that by their own folly and diſſentions forc'd the *Romans* to this ſorrowful Victory over them; for in truth all the remorſe and pity was on the Enemies ſide. The *Romans* were little more than Spectators in this cruel Tragedy, the *Jews* acted it upon themſelves: And they only who

who were arriv'd at that prodigious height of Impiety and wickedneſs were fit to be the executioners of this vengeance of God upon one another: As if the *Prophet* had foretold this, when he ſays, *Thine own wickedneſs ſhall correct thee.* Jer. 2. 19.

When Impiety and wickedneſs are at their higheſt pitch in a Nation, then they themſelves are the only proper inſtruments to puniſh one another. The *Romans* were by far too good and gentle to inflict a ſuffering upon the *Jews* that was equal to the evil of their doings: None but their own barbarous Selves, who were ſunk down into the very loweſt degeneracy of humane nature, were capable of ſo much cruelty and inhumanity as was requiſite to execute the Judgment of God upon them to that degree which their ſins had deſerved.

You ſee my Brethren, by what hath been ſaid upon this Argument, what were the *Faults*, and what the *Fate* of the *Jewiſh* Nation. Now *theſe things*, as the *Apoſtle* expreſly tells us, *were written for our admonition*, and to the intent that *we upon whom the ends of the World are come* might be inſtructed by them: *We*, I ſay, who next to the *Jewiſh* Nation ſeem to be a People highly favoured by God above all the Nations of the Earth. We reſemble them very much in their many and wonderful Deliverances, and a great deal too much in their Faults and Follies. But

But as I intend it not, ſo God forbid that there ſhould be any juſt ground for a full and exact Parallel between us; Yet this I muſt ſay, that nothing ever came nearer to them than We do in ſeveral reſpects. In our fickleneſs and inconſtancy, in our murmurings and diſcontents; for we are never pleas'd with what God does, neither when he brings us into danger, nor when he delivers us out of it: We reſemble them likewiſe, in our horrible profaneneſs and infidelity, and in our impiety and wickedneſs of ſeveral kinds: in our monſtrous ingratitude and moſt unworthy returns to the God of our Salvation: and laſtly, in our Factions and Diviſions, which were the fatal ſign of God's being departed from the *Jews*, and the immediate cauſe and means of thoſe diſmal Calamities which wrought their final Ruine. And how can we chuſe but dread leſt their Fate ſhould overtake us, the Example of whoſe Faults and Follies we do in ſo many things ſo nearly reſemble?

That this may not, nor any thing like it, be our Fate, let us apply our ſelves to the great Duties of this Day; a ſerious and deep Repentance, and humiliation of our ſelves before Almighty God for the many and heinous Sins which we in this Nation have been, and ſtill are guilty of, againſt His Divine Majeſty; by our profaneneſs and impiety, by our lewdneſs and luxury, by our oppreſſion and

and injuſtice, by our implacable malice and hatred one towards another, and by our ſenſleſs diviſions and animoſities one againſt another, without cauſe and without end: By our neglect of God's Worſhip, and profanation of his Holy Day, and by our dreadful abuſe of God's great and glorious Name in thoſe horrid Oaths and Curſes and Imprecations which are heard almoſt day and night in the ſtreets of this great City.

For theſe and all other our innumerable provocations of the patience and goodneſs and long-ſuffering of God towards us, let us ſadly repent our ſelves this Day, and *turn unto the Lord with all our hearts, with faſting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rent our hearts and not our garments, and turn unto the Lord our God; For he is gracious and merciful, ſlow to anger and of great kindneſs, and repenteth him of the evil: And who knoweth if he will return and repent and leave a bleſſing behind him? Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we ſhall be turned: Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly.*

And let us earneſtly begg of Him, that he would be pleaſed to prevent thoſe terrible Judgements and Calamities which hang over us, and which our Sins have ſo juſtly deſerved ſhould fall upon us: And that He would perfect that wonderful Deliverance which he hath begun for us,

and *eſtabliſh the thing which he hath wrought*: That He would bleſs *Them* whom he hath ſet in Authority over us; and particularly, that He would preſerve the Perſon of the *King* in his preſent Expedition, and crown him with victory and good ſucceſs.

And to our Repentance and Prayers let us add our liberal Alms, and according to the counſel given by the *Prophet* to *Nebuchadnezzar*, let us *break of our ſins by righteouſneſs, and our iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor, if ſo be it may be a lengthening of our tranquillity.*

We are yet, bleſſed be God, in the full enjoyment of peace and quiet at home, and of our Religion and Civil Liberties. God hath given us two excellent Princes ſitting on the Throne together, and both of the ſame Religion with the main Body of the Nation; and as bright Examples of piety and goodneſs as *England* ever ſaw: And who do by all ways and means ſtudy and ſeek the good of the People committed to their charge.

So that if we did but know our own happineſs, and how to value it, we might be the happieſt People this day under Heaven: And yet for all this, we are very far from being happy; becauſe we are neither contented, nor united; and tho we have all the materials of Happineſs about u

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and within our reach, yet have we not the skill and wiſdom to put them together.

Miſerable People! that may be happy and will not: whom neither ſo freſh a Deliverance from ſo great a Danger as was juſt ready to have ſwallowed us up, nor the fear and apprehenſion of falling again into the like confuſion, can be a warning to us from returning again unto the ſame folly: For thoſe odious and unhappy Names of difference which ſome years ago ſprang up among us, the Devil knows how, did ſeem whilſt a common danger threatned us, to be quite dead and buried: But no ſooner was the danger over, but by a kind of *miraculous* infatuation, behold a ſudden *Reſurrection* of them, with greater heats and animoſities, if poſſible, than before: Juſt as it was with the *Jews* in the Siege of *Jeruſalem*, when the *Romans* had made a wide breach and the City was furiouſly aſſaulted, the Factions then gave *Truce* to one another and ran in to the common defence; but as ſoon as ever the danger was a little over, they fell on afreſh and proſecuted their main deſign of deſtroying one another.

And now that the danger is a little over with us alſo, how like a Fate upon us does it look, that we are ſoon alter'd from our wiſer and better temper? Did we well and wiſely before our late happy Revolution, when we united for our common

defence againſt a common danger, and did let thoſe *unlucky Names* of diſtinction fall, ſo that they ſeem'd to be quite extinguiſh'd? And can it be now wiſe to revive them, and to take them up again? when the ſame danger in ſome degree, and from the ſame implacable Enemies, ſtill hovers over us? No ſurely, it would not be wiſe, if the danger were quite paſt and over; but when it ſtill remains and threatens us, what greater folly and infatuation can there be then ſtill to divide and quarrel among our ſelves? Will nothing but ſad and bitter experience be an admonition to us? Will nothing but the laſt neceſſity and extremity of things bring us to our ſelves and teach us wiſdom?

Methinks we ſhould all now be glad to be at reſt, after the tedious troubles and diſtractions, the fruitleſs quarrels and diviſions of fifty years. So long I remember; and in all that ſpace how very few years paſs'd over us without ſome great Calamity and diſmal Event? So that by this time one would think we ſhould all be ſick of our own follies, and ſo tir'd with our unprofitable feuds and diſſentions, as to make both ſides look about them, to ſee if any body will take pity on us, and ſtep in to part our quarrels.

And now I begin to be ſenſible, that I have engag'd in a tender Point indeed; and do feel my ſelf

ſelf ſtanding upon a very ſlippery place. For who is fit to interpoſe in ſuch hot and fierce differences? who can do it without danger, or with any hopes of ſucceſs? And yet for *Zion*'s ſake *I will not hold my peace*, for *Jeruſalem*'s ſake *I will not keep ſilence*: Of ſo great conſequence is it to the peace and happineſs of this Church and Nation, that theſe Names and Diſtinctions of Parties ſhould be laid down and aboliſh'd for ever.

In order whereunto I take it for granted and lay it for a Principle, that he who hopes to perſuade both ſides muſt provoke neither: And therefore I will not ſo much as enquire where the fault lies. It is in theſe Civil differences as in Family quarrels between Man and Wife, if any man ask on which ſide lies the fault; one may almoſt ſafely anſwer at a venture, on both ſides. It muſt indeed begin on one, but if it be not preſently heal'd and made up, the other Party is always ſo civil as to run in and take a ſhare of the fault, that all the blame may not lie wholly on one ſide.

And now, my Brethren, let me for once perſuade and prevail with you for your good: Let me be ſo happy as to ſay ſomething that may ſink into your hearts, and incline your minds to peace

peace and good agreement with one another. *Have ſalt in your ſelves*, ſays our *Bleſſed Saviour* the great *Peace-maker*, *and peace one with another.* By *Salt* is meant grace and ſpiritual wiſdom, and if *that* do but rule and ſway in our hearts, we ſhall then endeavour, *if it be poſſible, and as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all men.*

And if we were but once come to this healing temper, in this divided and diſtracted Nation, we ſhould not then need to fear *all the power of the Enemy.* And this our Enemies know full well: and therefore their chief policy and wiſdom is, and ever hath been, to divide us; and it will be our own great folly and weakneſs if we ſuffer our ſelves to be divided: But if we could agree and hold together, then our *Jeruſalem* would be *as a City that is compact together*, ſtrong and impregnable.

Let us then *be inſtructed*, and *know, in this our day, things which belong to our Peace, before they be hid from our eyes.* And let us all earneſtly endeavour *and pray for the peace of* Jeruſalem: *They ſhall proſper that love her*, ſays the *Pſalmiſt*, and they do not love her, that do not ſeek her peace and endeavour by all means to procure it: *That peace may be within her walls, and proſperity*

Pſal. 122.

ſperity within her Palaces: The one cannot be without the other; without Peace there can be no Proſperity. And to go on with the words of the *Pſalmiſt*, let every one of us ſay, yea let us all with one heart and voice ſay, *for our Brethren and Companions ſake*, for the ſake of our *Proteſtant* Brethren all the World over, let us ſay, *Peace be within thee: For the Houſe of the Lord our God*, for the ſake of our Holy Religion, and of that excellent Church whereof we all are, or ought to be Members, let every one of us ſay, *I will ſeek thy good.*

And what greater good can we do to the beſt Religion, how can we better ſerve the intereſt of it in all parts of the World, than by being at peace and unity among our ſelves, here in *England?* upon whom the eyes of all the *Proteſtants* abroad are fixed, as the Glory of the *Reformation*, and the great bulwark and ſupport of it.

That ſo under the Providence of Almighty God, and the conduct of two ſuch excellent Princes as He hath now bleſs'd us withal: The One ſo brave and valiant, and Both of them ſo wiſe, ſo good, ſo religious, we may at laſt arrive at a firm eſtabliſhment, and become *like Mount* Zion *that cannot* be moved; the perfe-

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ction of Beauty and Strength, and the admiration and *joy of the whole Earth*: which God of his infinite goodness grant, for his mercies sake in *Jesus Christ*: To whom, with thee O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, dominion and power, thanksgiving and praise both now and ever, *Amen.*

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

A Sermon preach'd before the Honourable House of Commons, on *Wednesday* the 16th of *April*; a Day appointed by Their Majesties, for a Solemn Monthly Fast.

A Sermon preach'd before the Queen, *March* 7th, 16$^{89}_{90}$.

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